SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

The Central Silk Board (Amendment), Bill 2005

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Now, we taken up the Cetnral Silk Board (Amendment) Bill, 2005.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Central Silk Board Act, 1948, be taken into consideration."

Sir, the proposed Central Silk Board (Amendment) Bill, 2005 aims to ensure quality standards for produciton of silk-worm seed, restrict production of seeds of only authorised races, to control unauthorised production and trade, to control and prevent the entry of untried and untested hybrids from other countries likely to be carrying disease and other unknown risks. With this view, the Central Silk Board (Amendment) Bill, 2005 was introduced in Rajya Sabha in 2005 for creation of regulatory mechanism with resepct to silk-worm seed that will comprise of creation of Silk-worm Seeds Committee under the Silk Board making them responsible for standards and other related matters, constitution of Hybrid Authorisation Committee and the Registration Committee, constitution of Seed Testing Laboratories and Agencies for testing and certifying and inspection of such seeds, vesting Customs Officers with the powers of inspection with respect to export and import and making hindrance to such standards a punishable act and making provision to give effect to the Central Silk Board Act and rules notwithstanding anything inconsistent contained in other enactments. After introduction of the Bill in Rajya Sabha, the Bill was referred by the hon. Speaker to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Labour for examination and report. The Committee has given certain recommendations. Most of the recommendations have been accepted by the Government and the revised Bill is for the consideration of the House.

The question was proposed.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Shri V. Narayanasamy-not present. Shri Moinul Hassan.

SHRI MOINUL HASSAN (West Bengal): Sir, the Central Silk Board (Amendment) Bill, 2005, is actually an old Bill. The main objective of this Bill is creation of a regulatory mechanism with respect to silk-worm seed. Hon. Minister has also mentioned it in his preliminary statement. Sir, as you know, sericulture is a very important sector as far as rural India is concerned. Sericulture creates lot of jobs for the rural population of our country. Traditionally, it is a very important sector. Those who live in rural areas, say that this sericulture sector plays a very important role. Sir, I rise to support this Bill because this mechanism is trying to improve the silk-worm seed which is very much necessary in this industry. So far as the Bill is conerned, I would like to draw the attention of the Minister towards the main objective of the Bill which is formation of Central Silk-worm Seed Committee. But, I have gone through the Bill and it consists of 10 Members. I suppose the silk-worm seed is a very technical subject. I have seen that there are only two Memebrs who are experts. I would like to ask the hon. Minister that if we do not increase the number of expert Members in this sector, then, who will take charge to regulate the production, supply, distribution, trade, commerce, etc. So, my suggestion is that the number of expert Members in the Committee should be increased. Though on page 3, in the last para, the Bill says that at any time, if the Committee desires, they can take the advice from outside. They can call any outsider in their meeting and take his advice. But, I would also like to say that there should be some more expert Members in the Committee. Another point that I would like to mention is about two representatives from sericulture sector, which is mentioned in clause 8A(iv). There is no criterion mentioned in the Bill as to who are these people. It only says that from the Central Silk Board, the Government can pick and choose these two Members. I would like to request that the Bill should provide some criterion for selecting these two Members from sericulture sector. Then, another important aspect of the Bill is creation of Registration Committee. Why is this Registration Committee? Sir, I would say that there are lot of dealers; there are lot of companies throught out the country which are dealing with silk-worm seeds. From my personal experience, I know that there are lot of fake seeds available throughout the country. Sometimes, we have seen that these fake seeds can destroy

the entire cultivation of sericulture. So, my suggestion is that this Registration Committee should be confined to this work only; otherwise, dealers selling fake seeds will destroy the entire cultivation and it will ultimately affect the common farmers. They will feel very much puzzled and they will not get any scope to survive. In this regard, I would like to say that we should do something for the proper registration of this committee. Sir, while talking about the Central Silk Board (Amendment) Bill, 2005, I would also like to mention some activities of Central Silk Board, related to my State West Bengal. Sir, you know that most fo the silk producing States are in the southern part of our country but West Bengal is the third highest silk-producing State. So, our proposal is like this. Sir, at present, it is very much necessary to import good quality silk-worm eggs from China. Sir, why I am talking about this is because so far as the geographical region is concerned, Tropic of Cancer passes through the sericulture belt of West Bengal and that of Southern China. The climatic conditions of both the regions are more or less similar in respect of temperature, rainfall, humidity etc. Hence, we need to improve the quality of silk in West Bengal so far as the silkworm eggs is concerned. It will be befitting for the climate of West Bengal. I would like to request the Government that we should seriously take care of it.

Sir, another problem that the State of West Bengal is facing is the dumping of Chinese silk. Sir, indiscriminate dumping of Chinese silk from across the border caused a virtual slump in the Cocoon and Silk market in the recent past. So, in this regard, I would like to request the Government of India-Anti-dumping charge on raw silk is already in existence-not to consider withdrawing this Anti-dumping law. Please continue with it. Otherwise, the silk industry of West Bengal, so far as geographical region is concerned, will be destroyed. So, the Anti-dumping laws that are already prevailing should continue.

Sir, my third point is related to the enhancement of subsidy to the sericulturists. Sir, I must say that majority of sericulturists, *i.e.* 85 per cent, in my State belong to Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe, minority community or other weaker sections of the society, and, 90 per cent of them are small and marginal farmers. So, the enhancement of subsidy is very much required. I request the Ministry and the hon. Minister who has brought forward the Bill, to enhance this subsidy to provide some relief to the minority community, Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and small

and marginal farmers who are very much engaged in this cultivation, so far as sericulture is concerned.

Sir, now I refer to another important subject. As I have already mentioned, in the southern part of our country, people are very much engaged in sericulture. Sir, West Bengal is the far-east State of our country. Therefore, I request the Central Silk Board to pay serious attention to this State. I would like to say something about the supply of seeds for this region, especially, supply of NB4D2 race from National Silkworm Seed Organisation. Sir, regularly, the Southern States switch over from one seed to other. Proper research and development is there but we are not getting proper help from the Central Silk Board. So, I would like to request the Minister that the Research and Development wing should pay proper attention to the State of West Bengal in order to help the small and marginal farmers. Sir, I would also like to mention that the Central Silk Board gives a subsidy of Rs. 200/- per kg of seed cocoons to the private seed producers to reduce their cost of production of silkworm eggs. I would like to request to continue this henceforth.

Sir, my another proposal is, there are a lot of *matka* spinners in West Bengal. There are about 35-40 thousand *matka* spinners in the State who are mostly destitute women living in abject poverty. According to the Tenth Plan, to augment their production, they are getting some subsidies. I would like to request the Central silk Board not only to continue with these subsidies, but also to increase them to improve the quality of *matka* production.

Sir, we have some proposal for the improvement of silk industry in West Bengal. It is the right time to build up some parks and hubs. Incidentally, today we have sent some proposal to the Government of India. The Minister of Government of West Bengal met our Minister in charge of Textiles today. A number of MPs were also there. Our proposal is, we are going to set up silk parks and hub at Murshidabad, Nodia and Malda. We seek some help from this Department of the Government of India because throughout the country, there is a market for Bengal silk, mainly the Murshidabad and Malda silk,. If Central Silk Board comes to provide us some help, it will take a great market throughout the country and abroad and also earn foreign exchange. I would like to say that I belong to the Murshidabad district. Thre is a big office of the Central Silk Board. They are doing a lot of work regarding research and development.

But, I would say that it should be properly utilised throughout our State. So, I would like to request the Ministry to do it properly. While supporting this Bill, I would like to seek your indulgence on it and I give this suggestion and make a demand also. With this, I conclude. Thank you, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Thank you, Mr. Moinul Hassan. Now, Shri Ravula Chandra Sekar Reddy. Not there. So, further consideration on the Bill will be taken up the next day. We will now take up Special Mentions.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): Sir, let us finish it up today.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): Today, it is not possible.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Why, Sir? Because Narayanasamy is not there?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): No, no. It is not like that. That is a decision by the Chair.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, this Bill has been postponed for so long. We should get it done today.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): We can get it passed tomorrow. There is no problem.

SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH: Sir, tomorrow is Friday. Let us finish it today. Sir, this Bill has been pending for so long. It is a very important Bill, Sir.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): You see, Mr. Narayanasamy and Mr. Ravula Chandra Sekar Reddy, have to speak, but they are attending the Business Advisory Committee. Then, there are other Members also who want to speak but they are not here. So, for the convenience of the Members, it is postponed to the next day. It could be taken up tomorrow. There is no problem. One day does not make much difference. You know this very well. Okay, now we will take up special Mentions.

SPECIAL MENTIONS (Contd.)

Need to renovate/upgrade Jamadarpali Airstrip in Sambalpur, Orissa

MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR (Orissa): Sir, Jamadarpali airstrip in Sambalpur, Orissa, is in a shambles. Built during the construction of Hirakud Dam, it provides landing facilities for officials visiting Sambalpur, Hirakud and the nearby districts. This airstrip gained greater significance after Jharsuguda aerodrome was declared unsafe.